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# Three Generations of Italians: Interview with Antonio Pompeii by Cheryl Babiec

Antonio Pompeii

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**COVER SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS**

**NAME OF INTERVIEWEE** Antonio Pompeii

**INTERVIEWER** Cheryl Babiec

**DATE OF INTERVIEW** 3/79

**SUBJECTS COVERED**

Life in Italy, description of village, home

Family, father's role in community

Education in Italy

Role of his mother

Emigration

Settlement, description of Federal Hill neighborhood

Employment

Education in U.S.

Traditions



Oral History Interview  
with  
ANTONIO POMPEII  
MARCH '79  
Stop & Shop Inc. Cumb. RI.  
By Cheryl Babiec

INTERVIEWER: I'm interviewing Antonio Pompeii who was born in Italy. And can you tell me a little bit about the community that you were born in?

INTERVIEWEE: My community at that time - I'm talking twenty years ago - consisted of approximately 3,000 people, which that brings it down to maybe 210 families - a very small community. The community itself, the town itself, was located on a very, very, high hill - you could call it a mountain actually. It consisted of typical Italian community with a church, town hall, and maybe - not even a post office - a little, little - maybe three to four stores, and a place where your olives during the peak of the olive season. You take your olives over there and they had these two gigantic stones, one on top of the other, and you throw your olives in it and a jackass use to pull the top stone to make it go round so you could make your oil - use to come out of it. And at the same token when you had - use to harvest grain, the wheat, you would take your wheat and the same stone - using the same stone - you would make flour. And in the



same token when it was time for corn - take it over there and you make corn meal.

INTERVIEWER: What was the name of the community?

INTERVIEWEE: Pico..... P\*I\*C\*O\*.

INTERVIEWER: Where (about) is it in Italy?

INTERVIEWEE: It's approximately 45 miles from Rome and probably 50 to 55 miles from Naples - up on the mountains.

INTERVIEWER: Was it a very self-sufficient community? Or did they rely (incomplete)?

INTERVIEWEE: Definitely! Well self-sufficient - the only place where they had electricity was the town. Nobody else had electricity.

INTERVIEWER: What was the proximity of your home to the next home. Was it something where - were you isolated?

INTERVIEWEE: I would say, distance wise, from my house? Well one side probably a half a mile and all the other three sides..well. One side, the south side, about a half a mile and the north side about 3 miles. On the east side I would say at least  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles and on the west side, and well see, where we use to live it's all valleys and hills, so the nearest home was across the valley which will be about 5 miles.

INTERVIEWER: Can you describe your home a little bit? What are some of the features?

INTERVIEWEE: My home, you can call it two basic ranches, side by side with an alley way in the middle between them. On one side there was a kitchen, with an open fireplace where you cook on and you have a place where you storage the bread. No ceiling, no walls, nothing. Everything consists of stone. Right next to this kitchen there was my bedroom. When I say my bedroom, me and my brothers - we all slept in the same bedroom, which the mattress was made out of



corn husk. And once a year when it was time for the corn season (corn harvest) we use to get - a brand - well take everything out of the mattress and put new ones in - boy it use to be funny. Then the next room after that, that's where we use to storage all our olives and anything that would keep from one season to the next because this is the only way we had for survival. In other words, this is the only means of food that we had. To keep storage from one season to the next. Now across from this it starts off with my Mother's bedroom and my Father's bedroom which - I was born in '45 and because of the war- see their bedroom was destroyed so they had to move to the next - they had to make another bedroom - next section of the house. And after that, after the bedroom, there was the stall for the - we had 3 cows, couple of horses/jackasses. Now between these two houses we use to have a place for the pigs. This is when we had the pigs right (I can picture you can't) in between the house but at one end and at the other end was open - that was our yard. Well, was open, as I described before, the kitchen, with a big, big fireplace, but underneath the fireplace, on the outside, this is where the chickens use to go - this was their home. And believe it or not, my job every morning was to tell my mother how many eggs that the chicken was going to lay during the day. That was one of my jobs.

INTERVIEWER:

To tell how may they were going to ...?

INTERVIEWEE:

How many eggs that the chicken was going to lay during the day. In other words, if we had lets say, just for the sake of talking, 10 chickens, right, when you open the door, at night time the chickens automatically go in



there, in the morning when you open the door to let them out, they come out one by one. And every one that comes out what you do, well, you feel the chicken to see if they're going to lay the egg during the day or not - you can tell. And we use to know how many eggs we were going to have.

INTERVIEWER: What was the reason why you wanted to? Why would you want to predict how many they were going to have?

INTERVIEWEE: Because different chickens use to lay eggs different places. And then I use to tell my mother. In other words you get to know your chickens, you get to know your animals and you get to know their habits. And if, in other words, we use to more or less know where this chicken use to lay the egg and you automatically, after certain, and now you go over there and just pick up the egg. Because, if you don't do this, the fox, they use to go over and they eat the eggs.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned about brothers - how large was your family?

INTERVIEWEE: My family consisted of my mother, my father, my brother Joe (which is the oldest), my brother Rocco(the middle), and myself. And by the way, my father did get married when he was sixteen and my mother was fifteen years old.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned before about the war destroying your home. When did that occur?

INTERVIEWEE: In 1944 (1943 - 45) well you know that they had a war in Italy during that time (the Second World War). Listen - I can talk about this for hours. I'm going to make it short. It started off that we had to leave our - first of all - I was picking dandelions with my grandmother (great grandmother) - which she died at 104.



INTERVIEWER: Did she live with you?

INTERVIEWEE: My great grandmother? Yes, she did. We were picking dandelions, like I mentioned before, where we live it's all vallies and hills, ok? We were picking dandelions and all of a sudden I spotted a.., I was only 3 or 4 years old, now some things you just can't forget, I spotted a plane and I told my great grandmother about the plane and we both looked at it. And before you know it - ok - the plane dropped what looked like old fashion wine bottles - happened to be bombs. And my uncle got killed, my father got hit in his left arm and all over his forehead and the guy that was working near my father lost his right arm. That's how I remember getting started.

INTERVIEWER: There was no warning what so ever?

INTERVIEWEE: Nothing what so ever. And during the war we use to, I remember, we use to live - my father made tunnels under the ground - we use to live under the ground and then when they came so close - I'm talking about the Moroccans - now they were the worst ones of all -when they came so close - we had to go live in the mountains. And the only way we actually survived, even though the Germans were our enemies, they use to give the kids candy bars - things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me a little bit about your father?  
We'll start talking about your father.

INTERVIEWEE: First of all, my father, as far as I could remember, was always in politics. When I say politics, I don't mean like a Mayor Cianci, because when you live in a town with a hundred families - it's very small. He was more or less a leader - so to speak - and they(everybody) use to look up to my father and we never really did see much of my father.



INTERVIEWER: When you said he was a leader, what type of things did he do?

INTERVIEWEE: For example, as I mentioned before, there was no telephone, no electric, no roads- nothing - not even any roads. So because of the heavy rains we use to get in the winter time and the roads were almost impassable - I made a statement, no roads, now I'm saying roads. I'm talking about paths - were almost impassable. That my father fought with the government so much that he finally got a paved - not even a paved road - he got a road made out of all small stones. And after he did this he became more or less like the town hero.

INTERVIEWER: You had mentioned that your father was in politics and everything - that you didn't see him much. What kind of effect did it have upon you? (ex) How did your mother compensate for your father's absence?

INTERVIEWEE: OK, when I say my father wasn't home much, I mean that he had a lot of business trips to go to. Because the nearest place where my father could deal with the government was either Naples or Rome. Now, maybe, he use to take off two days every 2-3 weeks (think like that)- was a business man. Now while he was away because my grandfather lived in this country (U.S.) he did nothing but buy land in the old country - Italy. We use to be, more or less, land rich. Now when your land rich, in those days in Italy, what you do is you can't take care of all the property yourself, so you give the property to that people that don't have as much land as you have. What they do is cultivate it and at the end of the season, when the crop is ready, they'll give you enough crop to pay your taxes on the property plus they give you a share of the crop.



(to let them use the property).

INTERVIEWER: You said your father was away all the time. Was it your duty then to cultivate everything?

INTERVIEWEE: It was my brother, first of aall, over there we use to go to school six days a week. And you don't go to school 8 to 2, like over here. Over there you go to school 7 to 5. And the nearest school to my house was like maybe seven, well it was in a town - five miles away, seven miles away. And we use to walk - no bicycles, no cars, no nothing - we use to walk every morning. After we got out of school...

INTERVIEWER: How long did you go to school when you say that? Do you mean just after you had finished school during the day?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. After you finished school during the day in the summer time, even in the winter for that, it's still light out. First of all, I've never seen snow over there - no such thing as snow. Now they get snow. What you do, my father use to hire people to cultivate the land by the way. What ever he didn't rent out he use to hire people but most of it my brothers and myself, and my mother - we use to take care of it and my father when he was home.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of role did your mother have? Did she ever work outside the home?

INTERVIEWEE: My mother use to cultivate the land, she use to help us - in other words - if it were the tomato season, pick the tomatoes, take care of the tomatoes. Whatever season, bean season, salad season, whatever season my mother - I would say, - she use to work with us, work in the house, between everything at least 15 - 16 hours a day. Between taking care of the meals - we use to have breakfast, dinner, and supper when we use to be home. So, she more or less made



sure in the morning we had breakfast, even though she came in the field with us during the day. When it was time for dinner, to go home and cook the dinner. When it was time for supper, to cook the supper.

INTERVIEWER: She never worked outside the home?

INTERVIEWEE: What do you mean? A job?

INTERVIEWER: (yes) a job.

INTERVIEWEE: A job - aw no. There's no such thing.

INTERVIEWER: I like the way you don't consider her or what she did at home - a job.

INTERVIEWEE: It was a .....

INTERVIEWER: A duty?

INTERVIEWEE: It was more or less survival Cheryl. Because it's a funny thing if you live in a town where everybody's poor. All these - like now - if I have a television and you don't have one, you come over maybe and before you know it you go out and buy a television. Over there, there's no such thing as those. I'm not talking about television now. I'm talking about, you know, you have this I don't have one - (I said) why you gonna go buy it? The biggest thing that was over there, once a year, when we use to get a package from the United States. My grandfather use to send us a package. Maybe inside this package there was maybe shirts, and pants, and things to work in because you couldn't spend any money for clothes because you didn't have any money to spend. You couldn't go out to get a job and somebody pay you money because even though you go out and work for somebody else they couldn't pay you in money because they didn't have it. They pay you in maybe a bushel of tomatoes, a bushel of peppers - things like that.



INTERVIEWER: You said your grandfather was in the United States. What made him come over?

INTERVIEWEE: My grandfather came in the United States approximately 1930.

INTERVIEWER: Was this you father's father?

INTERVIEWEE: My father's father. About 1930 and he took an apartment on Street in Federal Hill.

INTERVIEWER: Why did he settle there of all places?

INTERVIEWEE: Because....I really don't know the answer to that question.

INTERVIEWER: It seems like everybody (Italian) started going into that area. Did he know anybody that was settling there?

INTERVIEWEE: I really don't know - I don't know the answer to that question.

INTERVIEWER: What initiated you? Did you come over by yourself here, did you come with your family?

INTERVIEWEE: Now here's what happened. He came about 1930. About twenty years later my grandmother came. And 1951, I believe it was, that's when my grandfather made up the papers for me, well my whole family to come down here. I'm sorry, I'm wrong. Not this grandfather, I had another grandfather and grandmother. They went and lived in Pittsfield. They left Italy and they went and lived in Pittsfield Mass. And he's the one that initiated the papers for us to come over. It took us five years before the papers went through for us to come over. And we came over together.

INTERVIEWER: Why would it take so long for the papers to go through?

INTERVIEWEE: Because you have a quota. In other words, so many people could come down at once. So many people a year. First it started off only the head of the family could come over, find a place to live and then make papers for the rest of the family to come over. Then they changed that,



then it was the head of the family and the first son or the first daughter. Then they changed that in 1955. And they made it for the whole family to come over and get settled.

INTERVIEWER: And your father's political power could have no bearing on that.

INTERVIEWEE: No. Nothing what so ever.

INTERVIEWER: Why would your father want to give up the land and the prestige of being in politics to come over to the United States?

INTERVIEWEE: First of all, I'm sure it was very hard on my father because we had no money for the trip anyway. We had to sell some of the land so we could afford the trip to come over here. By the way, about a month before we were ready to get on the ship, that was the first time me and my brothers had a pair of shoes. We never had shoes until then, because there was no need for them. The other reason, I think, even until today and my father talks about it once in awhile, that my father came in this country, was because of us kids - to give us a break. He thought he was doing us a favor. But it was very, very, tough on him.

INTERVIEWER: How far along were you in school when you came over?

INTERVIEWEE: I was about 15 years old. I started school when I was 5 years old. Ten years old I was all done with grammar. Thirteen years old, I was all done with high school. And I had 2½ years of college.

INTERVIEWER: He says he wanted to come over to give you people a chance. A chance for what?

INTERVIEWEE: Everybody in that country, 20 years I'm talking about, use to think that the United States was a land of opportunity which is true. And he wanted to give us a chance. Because we'd been poor for so long, even though he was in politics that didn't mean he made any money



more than anyone else. The only reason why we had more land than anyone else was because my grandfather came to this country. And this was what possessed us to come over here because this was, everyone felt that this was - ever hear of that saying that money grows on trees - that's what we didn't really believe it - but that's the way they use to talk about this country. And if someone from this country used to go to Italy in those days - from this to come back to Italy for a visit - wow - . They use to have a parade and everything. By the way, they did have a parade for my father 3 years ago when he went back to Italy. They met him at the airport and took him (to community).

INTERVIEWER: When you came over to the United States where did you settle? Did your grandfather set you up? in Pittsville? Or....

INTERVIEWEE: When we came over, by the way my grandfather, even though he had so many years in the United States, was very poor. We never had a television, telephone, or anything like that or radio. When we came over and my grandmother met us in New York. By the way it took us fifteen days to come over by boat. Believe me, it was a boat. My grandfather picked us up in New York and he had no car or nothing. He never drove so we came by bus and on the way over from New York to over here.

INTERVIEWER: When you say "over here" - what do you mean?

INTERVIEWEE: From New York to Rhode Island.

INTERVIEWER: You settled in Rhode Island, you didn't go to Mass. with your grandmother/grandfather?

INTERVIEWEE: We settled with my father's grandfather - wait a minute - my father's father which is my grandfather on Federal Hill. But at first 4 - 5 weeks they more or less shipped me out



because there was no room in my grandfather's house because he only had a three room apartment. So they shipped me with my other grandfather in Pittsfield for about 2½ to 3 months. Cause there was no room or way until they found an apartment. And, by the way, my grandfather did not provide anything at all for my family - father's family - when we came over. My father had to find his own apartment, we had to find our own jobs. One of my brothers, he started working at 55¢ an hour. See my father found a job then my brothers started working and I went to school over here. My mother was working and over the time they found an apartment, they bought furniture and by this time about now - 2½ months - went by and I came back.

INTERVIEWER: Did anyone help you at all? You say you had gotten no assistance from your grandfather. Did anybody help you out outside? To find jobs - where to look?

INTERVIEWEE: I'm going to use a name - I'm not going to use the name. Yes, somebody did help us out. And they say by now he's a crime figure and all this baloney. What he did to the Italians when they came over, myself included, which he never took a dime from us, or he never came back to us and said hey look I did you a favor 20 years ago. These are things you can't ever pay back.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, so they helped you out and that was it.

INTERVIEWEE: He found a place I was to live. Of course, my father and my brothers and my mother for I was in Pittsfield.

INTERVIEWER: How did Federal Hill at that time compare to (with) your home in Italy?

INTERVIEWEE: Federal Hill at that time was like, well, you can't compare it to the community where I came from. But you can compare with a small city in those days. Because Federal Hill as you know is strictly Italian now, it's not



like it was strict.. was 100% Italian. The things we use to make in Italy, for example, we use to make fresh sausage and dry them up. We use to make our own cheese and dry it up. In those days you could go in any place on Federal Hill and buy those things, which you can't today.

INTERVIEWER: You said you can't really compare on standards of comparison - in production or anything like that. But did you feel very comfortable being there or was it a very big adjustment living on Federal Hill?

INTERVIEWEE: Of course. You can't speak a word of English. You're in a strange territory. You have to learn your surroundings. And you don't know where to turn.

INTERVIEWER: But seeing, you said, it was predominately Italian, did that make you at home any?

INTERVIEWEE: Predominately Italian, but that didn't mean that you knew the people. It's like, you couldn't really trust everybody because everybody was more or less for themselves. The Jews, they stick together. The Italians have, they have a tendency to pull in different ways.

INTERVIEWER: You were living with your grandfather. Did any of your other relatives come over? Most of your relatives had lived within that community in Italy. Did they start to migrate over?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Everybody else. well when I say everybody else I mean, my father's sister, my aunt - she's still over there. They took over the land and living better than us. They took over all the land and now lease all the land out.

INTERVIEWER: You know what I was wondering too... Before you mentioned that even though your grandfather



had been here for a little while, he really didn't have anything. Did you ever stop and think about it when you were going to be coming over? That you looked upon American as a land of opportunity and here your grandfather was here for a while and he still didn't have a lot of the things you had kind of expected. Or you never gave that a second thought - you just figured there's something here.

INTERVIEWEE: Don't forget when I came over I was only about 15/16 years old.

INTERVIEWER: Or even your father?

INTERVIEWEE: Well my father, first of all, it took him a good 15 years before my father accepted this country. He never liked it way from the beginning, because the way he was use to, this was a different kind of life all together. Plus he made the sacrifice because of us.

INTERVIEWER: You had the language barriers to contend with when you came over here...

INTERVIEWEE: The biggest thing was the language barrier. The next thing was to make friends, at my age. In those days they use to call us green horn, they use to call us \_\_\_\_ - you name it. It was a very, very hard thing to adjust to. I remember I had learned the word fight and I use to have a fight almost every night. But the kids I use to fight with, we turned out to be the best of friends and this is where I started making friends.

INTERVIEWER: You said you had a job - and what kind of job did you end up working at?

INTERVIEWEE: When I was in Pittsfield, I went to work for Biltmore Hotel - like I said I was 15 years old. I was washing dishes. My cousin that lived over there, he found me the job. And naturally I lied about my age when I went to work and about a month and a half after they found out I wasn't 16 they fired me.



INTERVIEWER: You had mentioned you went up to 2½ years of college in Italy, and you came here and you went to school here. Where did you go to school ( or did you continue college)?

INTERVIEWEE: When I came here, believe it or not, they put me in the fourth grade. By the end of the year I, call it whatever you want, I graduated grammar school. Then I went to Mt. Pleasant.

INTERVIEWER: Was that because of language ( fourth grade placement)?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. They didn't use to have ungraded rooms. They didn't use to have one room, like now, so you could learn the language - forget about the mathematics and all that stuff. They use to put me with the regular class and it was very, very hard. After that one year, I went to Mt. Pleasant. I don't know what happened, I zoomed right by it. Right before I moved, I graduated within a year. And then I wanted to be a radio technician. So the only place where I could learn this was Central High. So even though I had graduated from high school more or less, I went to Central High because they had this type of program. Because the school was so close to the city, they had a program for electronics, they had a program for electrician.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned about school, did that help you in meeting new friends?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, definitely. That's how I got started. By the way, I had neglected to mention that when I came over, came back from Pittsfield. You know that my family was all settled here and it was all right for me to come back. I went to look for a job at Stop and Shop and on Reservoir Avenue and the fellow by the name of \_\_\_\_\_ told the grocery manager in English



to tell me that he couldn't hire me because I couldn't speak English. And I told the grocery manager to tell him that if he did hire me I would someday become a store manager. And when I did have my final exams in Boston, he happened to be right over there and when I told him - he cracked up.

INTERVIEWER: So you had settled here and stayed mostly on Federal Hill. Are you still there today?

INTERVIEWEE: My grandfather moved out of there about a year ago. Because he's 93, my grandmother's 91, so they're kind of old and they're living with my father.

INTERVIEWER: Now where are you living?

INTERVIEWEE: My father, after about 3 years, he bought his own house on Rowley Street in Providence. And after they bought a house in Cranston where he's living at present. Me, at the age of 20 years old, I think, I got married. And I lived on Federal Hill another 7 years on Almy Street.

INTERVIEWER: Did they ever emphasize for you to stay or meet a nice Italian girl and marry her?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh all the time. As a matter fact they more or less pushed my brother Rocco to marry an Italian girl. Thank God to now that they're happy. But my other brother, Joe, he married an American girl and I married an American girl and it took my family a long, long time to get adjusted.

INTERVIEWER: Do you still maintain some ( now do you have) traditions?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh definitely. If it's somebody's birthday in the family, it's a big party. The whole family gets together Easter - any holiday you have - we get together. My father's birthday, my mother's birthday, my grandparent's - we make it a point to get together. And my mother especially (see you don't) when it's a party



like that - a birthday party - a simple thing, that the American custom - it's drinking coffee. The Italian custom is, first of all, it's not only the family, it's the friends, maybe it's the uncles - everybody. Everytime I ever want somebody over my house, it's at least 40/50 people. And they come over (around) pretty often during the year. And you have sandwiches, my wife cooks, of course we have the birthday cake, but you have the wine. We have everything. It's a feast. Believe me, I enjoy it because it keeps the family together and it gives us a chance to talk to your family about different things because the life style right now you don't see your family that much. So if you don't make it a point to see your family on different occasions, forget it. You lose all interest of life. Life doesn't mean anything to you anymore.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned marrying an American girl - is she of Italian descent?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, strickly the Italian descent which her mother and father were born in this country though. But her grandparents were born in Italy.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever go back to Italy?

INTERVIEWEE: No, but my father did go back like I said. By the way, they, when my father came to this country they built a big, big chapel on top of a hill where 3 roads meet. It's all made out of marble in my father's name. And when my father went back to sell some of the property, he sold everything except the house where us kids were born in, that's intact. And someday I'm going to take my kids to see it.

INTERVIEWER: Where is this church?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I can give you the Italian name \_\_\_\_\_

that's on top



- that's top of the hill.

INTERVIEWER: Now this is in Italy?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, in Italy. In other words, all the community got together and before we came to this country, they built in memory of my father, the chapel. Then they sent him a big, big picture, in the mail. He has it in his house.

INTERVIEWER: And how do you maintain any ties with Italy? Do you still write to the people?

INTERVIEWEE: I write to my cousins, my aunt once in awhile. I have some other cousins over there also. And at Christmas time and Easter time I make them a package for the kids, send them a package. And at Christmas time they send me maybe a big Torrone, what is it a - candy? Is that what you call it here?

INTERVIEWER: What is it?

INTERVIEWEE: Torrone. It's made out of sugar and almonds. You never had it? I don't believe it! We even sell it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have..... I imagine you would want the same things for your children that your father wanted for you people. The best of everything.

INTERVIEWEE: Well my children are going to have, they're going to get a good start in life. Because my grandfather did not own anything in this country, and because my father had to start from scratch, naturally, he had nothing to give us kids. Not only that, because my father was so young, and having us kids, he had nothing. So, my kids are going to get a different kind of start because I own my own home and I invested a lot of money in property. So they're going to have a different kind of start.

INTERVIEWER: Do you still speak Italian at home once in awhile?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes definitely.



INTERVIEWER: And your children do too?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So you maintain your ties...

INTERVIEWEE: Especially when mother and grandfather are still over in Italy. As a matter of fact, I just built a fireplace and we get together once in awhile with the family, We cook sausage on it, we cook steak... A big family get-together.

INTERVIEWER: Would you want them to maintain the Italian ways....

INTERVIEWEE: Well, I'd like them to, but it all depends the nationality they marry into.

INTERVIEWER: You're not emphasizing to stick with Italians.

INTERVIEWEE: I'd like them to stick with Italian, but I'd never push them. By the way, I make my own wine.

INTERVIEWER: You make your own wine? What kind do you make?

INTERVIEWEE: (omit) grapes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think if you had to make a decision like your father made of coming over, do you think you would have done it? Just thinking about the hardships you would be faced with?

INTERVIEWEE: The way we're use to today, our standard of living, of today, I say no, I would have never done it. But the way the standard of living were in those days, yes, I probably would have done the same thing.

INTERVIEWER: How come you never went back to Italy? You know, just for a visit or anything?

INTERVIEWEE: More or less because I settled over here. I got married, my kids were young. Even though we took trips every year, to different cities, I believe I want to see the United States first. And my kids were not old enough to appreciate it. Now that they're old enough to appreciate it, we'll probably go. My father, my mother, and my brothers, they've all been back.



INTERVIEWER: How would you consider yourself when you go back? Would you say you're an Italian or would you say you're an American?

INTERVIEWEE: You would have to say you're an American.

INTERVIEWER: Even though you were born in Italy?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, definitely. My patriotics is still in Italy even though I'm an American citizen. But let's face it, that's my mother land. But I have to say if I go back now, I'm strictly American.